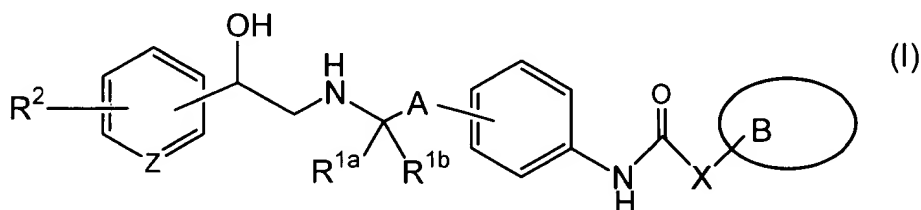


1. (Twice Amended) A compound of formula (I):



in the formula, each of the symbols means as follows:

ring B is a heteroaryl group which is unsubstituted or substituted and is optionally fused with a benzene ring;

X is a bond, or a lower alkylene or an alkenylene, both of which are unsubstituted or substituted with hydroxy or a lower alkyl group, or X is a carbonyl or a group represented by $-NH-$, and when X is a lower alkylene which is substituted with a lower alkyl group, a carbon atom of the ring B optionally bonds with the lower alkyl group so that a ring is formed;

A is a lower alkylene or a group represented by $-lower\ alkylene-O-$;

R^{1a} , R^{1b} are the same or different and each is a hydrogen atom or a lower alkyl group;

R^2 is a hydrogen atom or a halogen atom; and

Z is a group represented by $=CH-$;

or a salt thereof.

2. (Once Amended) The compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof according to claim 1, wherein A is methylene, ethylene, or a group represented by $-CH_2O-$.

B3

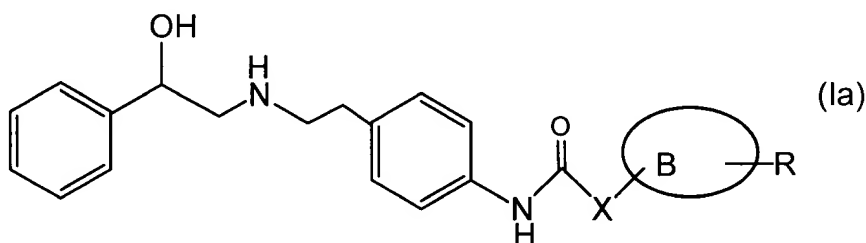
3. (Twice Amended) The compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof according to claim 2, wherein the ring B is a heteroaryl group which is substituted with a substituent chosen from a halogen atom, lower alkyl, lower alkenyl, lower alkynyl, hydroxy, sulfanyl, halogeno lower alkyl, lower alkyl-O-, lower alkyl-S-, lower alkyl-O-CO-, carboxy, sulfonyl, sulfinyl, lower alkyl-SO-, lower alkyl-SO₂-, lower alkyl-CO-, lower alkyl-CO-O-, carbamoyl, lower alkyl-NH-CO-, di-lower alkyl-N-CO-, nitro, cyano, amino, lower alkyl-NH-, di-lower alkyl-N-, aryl-lower alkyl, halogeno aryl-lower alkyl, guanidino, lower alkyl-CO-NH, and lower alkyl-SO₂-NH-.

B4

4. (Once Amended) The compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof according to claim 3, wherein R², R^{1a} and R^{1b} are each a hydrogen atom, and Z is =CH-.

B5

5. (Twice Amended) A compound of formula (Ia):



in the formula, each of the symbols means as follows:

ring B is a heteroaryl group;

X is a bond or a lower alkylene group;

R is a hydrogen atom, a halogen atom, a lower alkyl group, amino group, an aryl lower alkyl group, or a halogeno aryl-lower alkyl group; or a salt thereof.

6. (Once Amended) A compound:

B^s
(R)-4'-[2-[(2-Hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]-2-pyridinecarboxyanilide,
(R)-2-[1-(4-chlorobenzyl)-1H-imidazol-2-yl]-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]-acetanilide, (R)-2-[1-(3,4-dichlorobenzyl)-1H-tetrazol-5-yl]-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]acetanilide,
(R)-2-(2-aminothiazol-4-yl)-4'-[2-(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]acetanilide,
(R)-2-(2-benzyl-1H-1,2,4-triazol-3-yl)-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)-amino]ethyl]acetanilide,
(R)-2-(2-aminopyridin-6-yl)-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]acetanilide, (R)-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]-2-(2-pyridyl)acetanilide,
(R)-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)-amino]ethyl]-2-(2-pyrazinyl)acetanilide, (R)-4'-[2-[(2-hydroxy-2-phenylethyl)amino]ethyl]-2-(2-pyrimidinyl)-acetanilide, or a salt of any of the foregoing.

7. (Twice Amended) A composition comprising at least one compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof as claimed in one of claims 1 through 4 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

36
⁸
9. (Once Amended) The composition as claimed in claim 7, wherein the at least one compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof is present in an amount effective for the treating of diabetes mellitus in a human or animal patient in need of such treating.

⁹
10. (Once Amended) The compound of formula (I) as claimed in claim 1, wherein the compound of formula (I) is an optical isomer, a hydrate, or a solvate of the compound of formula (I).

¹⁰
11. (Once Amended) A composition comprising a compound of formula (I) as claimed in claim 1 in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, wherein the compound of formula (I) is present as a polymorphic substance.

¹³
12. (Once Amended) A method for treating diabetes mellitus in a human or animal patient in need of such treatment comprising administering to the patient an amount of a compound of formula (I) as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amount is an amount effective for such treatment.

¹⁴
13. (Once Amended) A method for treating obesity in a human or animal patient in need of such treatment comprising administering to the patient an amount of a compound of formula (I) as claimed in claim 1, wherein the amount is an amount effective for such treatment.

11
14. (New) A composition comprising at least one compound of formula (I) or the salt thereof as claimed in claim 5, in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

12
15. (New) A composition comprising at least one compound or the salt of any of the foregoing as claimed in claim 6, in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

REMARKS

I. Amendments to the Claims

Claims 1-7 and 9-15 are now pending. Claims 1-7 and 9-13 have been amended, without prejudice to pursuing canceled subject matter, if any, in a continuation application, without disclaimer of any subject matter, and without acquiescence to any rejection, objection, or requirement.

Claims 1-7 and 9-13 were amended to recite "a compound" instead of "an amide derivative," in accordance with the Examiner's suggestion. See Office Action at page 4. The claims were also amended to remove non-elected subject matter: specifically, in claim 1, Z is no longer claimed to be a nitrogen atom. These amendments simply clarify the meaning of the claims, and support may be found throughout the application and claims as originally filed.

Claim 6 was amended by adding the words "a compound." Support for this amendment can be found, among other places, in claim 6 as originally filed. Claim 7 now depends in the alternative from one of claims 1 to 4. New claims 14 and 15 have been added to claim those compositions comprising at least one compound of claim 5 and claim 6, respectively. Support for this amendment may be found, among other